

Valles Caldera Trust Interpretive Group Programs

Guided Group Programs

1 hour	Van Tours	Magma to Magpie (1 hour).....	\$45/van
	Guided Hikes	Ranching History (1 hour).....	\$8/person
		Historical Ranch Headquarters (1 hour).....	\$8/person
2-3 hours	Van Tours	Elk Viewing (2 hours).....	\$80/van
		Wild Nightlife (2.5 hours).....	\$80/van
		Sightseeing Photo Stops (2.5 hours).....	\$80/van
		Wildlife Habitat Connections (3 hours).....	\$120/van
	Guided Hikes	South Banco (3 hours).....	\$10/person
		La Jara Speaks (3 hours).....	\$10/person
		Uncovering Wildlife in Hidden Valley (3 hours).....	\$10/person

For more information or to schedule a program, please contact our Interpretation & Education Specialist

Email: kdevall@vallescaldera.gov

Phone: 505-428-7737



Valles Caldera Trust Interpretive Group Programs

Guided Group Programs

4-5 hours	Van Tours	Lights, Camera, Caldera! (5 hours)	\$200/van
		Earth, Water & Fire (5 hours).....	\$200/van
		Archaeology of the Caldera (5.5 hours)	\$200/van
		Prehistoric Obsidian Quarries (5.5 hours)	\$200/van
	Guided Hikes	Prehistoric Agriculture on the Banco Bonito (4 hours).....	\$12/person
		Rincon de los Soldados (4.5 hours).....	\$12/person
		Natural History of South Mountain (5 hours)	\$12/person
		Amateur Birders (5 hours)	\$12/person
		Restoring Alamo Canyon's Past (5 hours)	\$12/person
		Guided Snowshoe Hike in Hidden Valley (5 hours, snowshoe rental is an additional charge).....	\$12/person
6+ hours	Guided Hikes	Sharpen Your Senses with La Garita (6 hours).....	\$15/person
		How Nature Recovers Abrigo (6 hours).....	\$15/person
		The Return of the Beaver (6 hours).....	\$15/person
		Glowing Along Valle Cañon (6 hours).....	\$15/person
		Embers that Heal – Lessons in Wildfire Ecology (6 hours).....	\$15/person
		Nature's Breath Lurks Beneath (6 hours).....	\$15/person

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Valles Caldera Trust Interpretive Group Programs

Custom Tours & Hikes Created Just For Your Group

Custom	Van Tours	Tour Length of 1 to 1.5 hours	\$75/van
		Tour Length of 2 to 2.5 hours	\$120/van
		Tour Length of 3 to 3.5 hours	\$160/van
		Tour Length of 4 to 4.5 hours	\$200/van
		Tour Length of 5 to 5.5 hours	\$240/van
		Tour Length of 6 to 6.5 hours	\$280/van
		Tour Length of 7 to 7.5 hours	\$320/van
	Guided Hikes <i>(Hike length includes driving time to trailhead)</i>	Hike Length of 1 to 1.5 hours	\$12/person
		Hike Length of 2 to 2.5 hours	\$14/person
		Hike Length of 3 to 3.5 hours	\$16/person
		Hike Length of 4 to 4.5 hours	\$18/person
		Hike Length of 5 to 5.5 hours	\$20/person
		Hike Length of 6 to 6.5 hours	\$22/person
		Hike Length of 7 to 7.5 hours	\$24/person

Special Use Permits

Permit	Access to the Preserve	This option is perfect for groups who do not want interpretive or educational programs from the Trust.	TBD, based on request
		<p><i>To apply for access you must contact the VCT Special Uses/Event Coordinator and request the 'Special Use Permit' form. Once completed send back to the VCT Special Uses/Event Coordinator who will notify you if the application has been approved.</i></p> <p>(This permit is not required if the Trust is providing 100% of the interpretive or educational programming for your group)</p>	

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Van Tours

Van tours are designed for groups of ten individuals. If your group is larger than ten, options can be discussed during the reservation process.

Magma to Magpie (1 hour)

If you have never been to the Preserve or don't know much about its past, our Magma to Magpie tour is a perfect option. During this short tour, you will learn the geologic history that shape the valles caldera and Jemez Mountains, how the preserve's diverse habitats attract wildlife, how people used the area historically, and how research on the Preserve is influencing management of today's public lands.

Elk Viewing (early morning or evening, 2 hours)

The Rocky Mountain Elk is one of the most majestic North American animals living today. These beautiful, powerful, and graceful creatures roam the Preserve by the hundreds, with their total presence on the land in the thousands. Come tour the preserve hoping to catch a glimpse of the elk that makes this area their home.

Wild Nightlife (after dark, 2.5 hours)

You may get a glimpse of rarely seen nocturnal wildlife such as bats, carnivores, bears, frogs, salamanders and others that may be lurking in the darkness of Preserve. Best of all, you will get in-depth knowledge of their life history and their important role in the environment. Most predators and other mammals are active at night. The tour consists of looking for, calling and listening to nocturnal wildlife. For this van tour, the group will meet the interpreter (guide) at the **Banco Bonito Staging Area** (entrance is near mile marker 30 on Hwy. 4).

Sightseeing Photo Stops (2.5 hours)

This tour is a great opportunity to see and photograph various icons on the Preserve. Photo opportunities include the historical headquarters area of the old Baca Ranch (featuring 100 year-old cabins), History Grove (an old-growth forest), a ghost town (old movie set), and the sinuous Jaramillo Creek. Other stops may be made if time permits.

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Wildlife Habitat Connections (early morning or evening, 3 hours)

Explore the Preserve with a guide to reveal why animals live in certain places. Knowing the natural history of wildlife will foster a deeper understanding of how we can go beyond observing animals, but rather, contemplating them with conservation in mind. Several short stops are planned as related to wildlife habits and habitat; these short walks are encouraged but are an option depending on the participant's interests. Join us for an intimate look at wildlife and habitat relationships!

Lights, Camera, Caldera! (5 hours)

Enjoy scenic views as you travel approximately 36 miles within the Preserve. There will be several stops at movie set locations where you will hear the history of movie making from the early 1970's to today. See what draws Hollywood, Ballywood and many other media professionals to this beautiful landscape for filming movies, taking still shots for commercials and catalog layouts.

Earth, Water & Fire (5 hours)

During this tour, you will discover how climate has changed through time at the Preserve and how this relates to recent wildfires. Explore how these changes are connected to our precious freshwater resources, such the San Antonio Creek and East Fork of the Jemez, which both begin their journeys on the Preserve. Learn about the latest research findings related to climate, water, and fire, and how this could affect you.

Archaeology of the Caldera (5.5 hours)

People have depended on the bountiful resources available within the caldera for thousands of years. Before becoming a Preserve, the archaeological record inside the caldera was poorly known. Today we are piecing together a clearer picture of how people lived in the past – how they hunted game and gathered plants, and more recently, herded sheep and raised cattle. A Valles Caldera Trust archaeologist will show you some of the exceptional and previously unseen historic and prehistoric archaeological sites in the Jemez Mountains.

Van Tours

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Prehistoric Obsidian Quarries (5.5 hours)

Led by a Valles Caldera Trust archaeologist, this van tour combines archaeology and volcanology and will visit the vast obsidian quarries of Cerro del Medio. Learn how obsidian was formed 1 million years ago, how obsidian tools were manufactured, and how archaeologists today use obsidian to understand the human past in the Jemez Mountains and beyond. NOTE: This tour is more technical in nature and explores archaeology at a greater depth.

Guided Hikes

Guided hikes are designed for groups of 10-20 people. If your group is larger, options can be discussed during the reservation process.

Unless otherwise noted, all guided hikes require some form of transportation from the staging area to the trailhead. Transportation logistics will be discussed during the reservation process. Total time commitment is designated on title line.

Ranching History (1 hour)

Length = 1.5 miles, Elevation Change = 50 feet, Driving Time = 0 minutes from Valle Grande Staging Area

Join us on this short, easy hike to learn how ranching practices have changed over the years, shaped by the land owners and ranchers who used this land back when it was “Baca Location #1” to its present use as the Valles Caldera National Preserve.

Historical Ranch Headquarters (1 hour)

Length = 1 miles, Elevation Change = 50 feet, Driving Time = 5 minutes from Valle Grande Staging Area

Join us for this short, easy hike to find out who lived in the historical ranch headquarters, where a few buildings date back 100 years. Learn how the previous land owners of “Baca Location #1” grew up, worked, and raised families in the historic homes.

South Banco (3 hours)

Length = 2 miles, Elevation Change = 200 feet, Driving Time = 0 minutes from Banco Bonito Staging Area

Explore the extreme southwest corner of the Preserve with an interpreter and learn about the latest lava flow of the Valles Caldera volcano.

Wander through the Banco Bonito area south of Highway 4 and explore why the forest looks the way it does and how the area was used long ago by the ancestors of the Jemez Pueblo. For this hike, the group will meet the interpreter (guide) at the **Banco Bonito Staging Area** (entrance is near mile marker 30 on Hwy. 4).

Guided Hikes

Guided hikes are designed for groups of 10-20 people. If your group is larger, options can be discussed during the reservation process.

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La Jara Speaks (3 hours)

Length = 2 miles, Elevation Change = 250 feet, Driving Time = 0 minutes from Valle Grande Staging Area

Cerro la Jara is a distinctive ring-fracture dome that is a reminder of the volcanic forces that shaped this land. A preserve interpreter will guide you up La Jara's slopes into the forested realm above where we can peer out in all directions at the grasslands below. Stories abound along our way – of geologic wonders, archeological mysteries and a variety of plant and animal habitats. Since there is no established trail on La Jara, portions of our hike will be over rough and steep terrain.

Uncovering Wildlife in Hidden Valley (3 hours)

Length = 3 miles, Elevation Change = 150 feet, Driving Time = 10 minutes from Valle Grande Staging Area

Explore a sheltered area where coyotes reside before heading down Hidden Valley alongside the meandering East Fork of the Jemez River.

The trail is not marked as it is rarely hiked. As your guide leads you through this beautiful canyon, you will learn about its geology and get a close-up view its riparian area.

Prehistoric Agriculture on the Banco Bonito (4 hours)

Length = 2 miles, Elevation Change = 75 feet, Driving Time = 0 minutes from Banco Bonito Staging Area

Banco Bonito was intensively used in the past for prehistoric farming. From about A.D. 1000 until the 1600s after European Contact, farmers built hundreds of small stone structures, called field houses, where they stayed and watched over crops. Led by a Valles Caldera Trust archaeologist, you'll visit a variety of these farming settlements and learn about the crucial role they played in Jemez prehistory. NOTE: This tour is more technical in nature and explores archaeology at a greater depth.

Guided Hikes

Guided hikes are designed for groups of 10-20 people. If your group is larger, options can be discussed during the reservation process.

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Rincon de los Soldados (4.5 hours)

Length = 5 miles, Elevation Change = 920 feet, Driving Time = 30 minutes from Valle Grande Staging Area

Enjoy hiking along the secluded northeastern part of the Valle Grande and then ascending along an old forested army road between Cerro Grande and Sierra de los Valles. This guided hike mixes spectacular landscapes with historical anecdotes from the mid 1800's. If you are interested in seeing the headwaters of the Jemez River and learning why the army in Santa Fe needed hay from here back in the 1850's, this guided hike is for you.

Natural History of South Mountain (5 hours)

Length = 5 miles, Elevation Change = 1,000 feet, Driving Time = 15 minutes from Valle Grande Staging Area

Join a Preserve interpreter on a hike on South Mountain as we discover its natural history. This adventure is especially well-suited for families and other individuals who want an interpretive experience in a pleasantly shaded trail.

Amateur Birders (early mornings, 5 hours)

Length = 5 miles, Elevation Change = 1,000 feet, Driving Time = 15 minutes from Valle Grande Staging Area

This family friendly hike is a treat for both youth and adults alike. An interpreter will share the life history of birds observed and highlight their identification secrets. Chances to see other wildlife, great and small, abound at the Preserve. No prior knowledge of birds is required.

Guided Hikes

Guided hikes are designed for groups of 10-20 people. If your group is larger, options can be discussed during the reservation process.

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Restoring Alamo Canyon's Past (5 hours)

Length = 6 miles, Elevation Change = 900 feet, Driving Time = 30 minutes from Banco Bonito Staging Area

Get ready to hike a trail that changes colors depending on when you visit. Even the unusual wetland found here called a “fen” changes color depending upon the presence of aquatic organisms at the time of your visit. At the fen’s headwaters, the wetland’s plant community also portrays differing hues of green that change depending upon the season. In spring, wildflower communities adorn your path and change depending upon their flowering time. Fall welcomes the warm colors of aspens, maples and oaks against an intensely blue sky. For this hike, the group will meet the interpreter (guide) at the **Banco Bonito Staging Area** (*entrance is near mile marker 30 on Hwy. 4*).

Guided Snowshoe Hike in Hidden Valley (5 hours)*

Length = 3 miles, Elevation Change = 150 feet, Driving Time = 10 minutes from Valle Grande Staging Area

Join us as light shimmers upon frosted pines. Touch recently fallen snow that adorns rock, earth, and water. Come snowshoe along Hidden Valley! Your guide will lead you through an impressive and rarely traveled canyon, while learning how humans and wildlife adapt to winter. Snowshoes are required. Snowshoeing is difficult, even though we will be traveling on mostly level ground. **The Trust does have a limited number of snowshoes in various sizes that can be rented at \$15 each for adult sizes and \$10 each for youth sizes.*

Sharpen Your Senses with La Garita (6 hours)

Length = 7 miles, Elevation Change = 1,800 feet, Driving Time = 45 minutes from Valle Grande Staging Area

If you are ready for a physical challenge and would like to explore the northern part of the Preserve, hiking Cerro la Garita will definitely wake up your senses. The hike is an up and back trip along a steep trail. Once hikers reach the top, spectacular southern views of the northern lava domes, creeks and valleys reveal the impressive dimensions of the Preserve.

Guided Hikes

Guided hikes are designed for groups of 10-20 people. If your group is larger, options can be discussed during the reservation process.

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How Nature Recovers Abrigo (6 hours)

Length = 7 miles, Elevation Change = 700 feet, Driving Time = 30 minutes from Valle Grande Staging Area

Let nature and an interpreter guide you around a panoramic view of the Valles Caldera National Preserve. You will hike around Cerros del Abrigo. This lava dome teaches humans about the grand healing power of nature and how we can become more humble after nature reveals her secrets of renewal. The hike combines cultural and natural history as an integrated whole. You will know how humans uncovered Abrigo's coat in the past, and how nature recovers its previously unprotected landscape from recent past fire.

The Return of the Beaver (6 hours)

Length = 8 miles, Elevation Change = 900 feet, Driving Time = 45 minutes from Valle Grande Staging Area

Explore one of the least travelled trails on the Preserve. The path follows a creek, Rito de los Indios, where old beaver dams were once present. An interpreter will share why the dams no longer exist and what the Trust is doing to bring beavers back. This is your chance to learn about restoration ecology along a wetland surrounded by grasslands and forests. Scheduled hiking time coupled with the group's walking speed will determine our final turn around spot as this is an up and back trail.

Glowing Along Valle Cañon (fall season, 6 hours)

Length = 5 miles, Elevation Change = 920 feet, Driving Time = 30 minutes from Valle Grande Staging Area

Enjoy hiking along the secluded northeastern part of the Valle Grande and then ascend along an old forested army road that turns gold in the fall. Aspens abound and flicker about with their golden sheen while the wind caresses your cheeks. An interpreter will share adaptations plants and animals must deal with to survive before the onset of winter. This area recently burned, but aspen are sprouting back vigorously, and the aspen stands at the top of the trail are still intact.

Guided Hikes

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Embers that Heal – Lessons in Wildfire Ecology (6 hours)

Length = 7 miles, Elevation Change = 750 feet, Driving Time = 30 minutes from Banco Bonito Staging Area

Come learn about fire ecology and forest succession at the Preserve. Cerro Seco trail is located in the mid-northwestern section of the Preserve. This rocky path is home to horned lizards and pioneer plants that shoot-up after natural disturbance occurs. The trail tops out at an elevation of about 9,600 feet on the Cerro Seco lava dome and offers spectacular views of Redondito Peak—a sight you cannot miss! For this hike, the group will meet the interpreter (guide) at the **Banco Bonito Staging Area** (entrance is near mile marker 30 on Hwy. 4).

Nature's Breath Lurks Beneath (6 hours)

Length = 4 miles, Elevation Change = 800 feet, Driving Time = 30 minutes from Banco Bonito Staging Area

Explore this meandering up and back hike on the northwestern part of the Redondo uplift. The trail goes along aspen groves, other forests, and a beautiful pond that provide superb opportunities for wildlife viewing. You will see what a well pad looks like while your interpreter shares the cultural history of the area as related to the cessation of geothermal exploration on the Preserve. For this hike, the group will meet the interpreter (guide) at the **Banco Bonito Staging Area** (entrance is near mile marker 30 on Hwy. 4).